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UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

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ENGLISH

APPROVAL OF UNDP ASSISTANCE TO A PROJECT OF
ARGENTINA

IPF:(1987-91) $ 9 455 000

(ARG/90/012) - Consulidation of Computerization
of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Date of approval by the AC:[1/]	25 September 1991
Expected duration:	Four years
Proposed executing agency:	Government
Government implementing agency:	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Proposed UNDP contribution:	$ 550 000 Source of funds: IPF
Government cost sharing:	$ 7 106 900
Total UNDP budget:	$ 7 656 900

Project background

The above-mentioned project proposal has been designed on the basis of the outcome and the in-depth evaluation of the project (ARG/86/026) Computerized Systems in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which was completed in late 1990. The initial impetus for ARG/86/026 was the decision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to strengthen its institutional framework to manage more efficiently the workload and the day-to-day operations of the Ministry. UNDP was requested to provide technical co-operation within the Country Programme-framework of assisting in the overall strengthening of the public sector in Argentina.

During the early and mid-1980s the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shared the general characteristics of serious deterioration of the Argentinean public sector. This had a detrimental effect on foreign policy formulation and commercial relations in a period when the country decided to initiate an aggressive effort to redefine and open its political, economical and commercial relations to help it stabilize its democratization process. This effort coincides with the need to rationalize the public sector as an element in the country's economic adjustment programme.

The approach chosen during the first phase was to design and put into operation a cost-efficient computer facility to a large variety of users in the Ministry and its offices abroad. This objective has been successfully accomplished, and the main outputs are:(1) 400 workstations installed and operative in Buenos Aires and in 10 embassies giving users access to a series of computerized functions supported by a centralized server architecture;(2) 700 staff members of the Ministry trained in use of different software

[1/] This Fact Sheet reflects the status of the project/revision at the time it was approved by the Action Committee; modifications to the project/revision may have occurred subsequently.

packages; 450 in dispatch, receipt and tracking of cables as well as 250 in electronic mail;and (3) systems installed in Buenos Aires and in embassies/consulates such as: Electronic Mail, Task Management System, Document Movement System that allows telex generation, dispatch, receipt and tracking, Basic Word Processing, Personnel System, Semi-automatic capture of incoming cable headers.

The overall effect of the computer systems and services produced with the assistance of the project have been to significantly increase productivity and simplify administrative procedures. An independent evaluation mission undertaken in mid-1990 recommended strongly that the project should be enthusiastically supported and "lessons learned here could be applied to other projects in the public sector in Argentina, Latin America as a whole and perhaps even elsewhere". The second phase of the project proposed by the Ministry will consolidate and extend key services developed on an experimental basis, and will enable the development focus to shift to the administrative systems, such as Personnel, Accounting, and Payroll.

Description of project

The development objective of the project is to strengthen the Ministry's management capacity and administrative efficiency by assisting the Ministry in carrying out its foreign policy making and implementation functions, and making its administrative operation manageable and efficient.

The immediate objectives of the project are to:(a) utilize systematically office automation facilities, daily work standardization, and communications, and international data base and networks access;(b) enable 80 embassies and consulates to operate the new systems;(c) put in operationadministrative systems, such as Personnel,Accounting and Payroll;(d) eliminate delays and make readily available information for budgetary decisions;(e) implement new software applications; (f)train 200 Ministry staff in addition to the staff already trained;(g) implement the electronic mail network for the academic and scientific institutions; and (h) strengthen the Informatics Unit of the Ministry.

Project activities will include:(a) installation and deployment of standard hardware and software;(b) design, development and deployment of tailor-made software both in Buenos Aires and in embassies and missions abroad; and (c) training and support of Foreign Service Staff and officials in the use of the computerized systems.

Inputs

UNDP will provide 576 man-months of administrative support;3268 man-months for experts and consultants in fields such as informatics, systems development, installation/maintenance of systems and specialized training; on-the-job training ; resources for project personnel travel to embassies and consulates for the installation of systems and equipment; expendable non-expendable equipment; and miscellaneous costs.

Financial data

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Personnel	2 460 200
Training	1 037 200
Equipment	3 330 000
Miscellaneous	829 500
Total	7 656 900